

REMARKS

Claims 37-72 are pending in this application. Claims 37-72 are rejected. Claims 37-40, 42, 44-48, and 50-72 are amended hereby.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 64-69 under 35 U.S.C § 112, second paragraph, Applicant has amended claims 64 and 65 to depend from claim 63. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 64 and 65, and claims 66-69 depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 37-44, 46-47, 50-58, 62-63, and 70-72 under 35 U.S.C § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,569,290 (Johnson), and to the rejection of claims 37-44, 48-66, and 70-71 under 35 U.S.C § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,781,967 (Legge et al.), Applicant has amended claims 37 and 50. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 37 and 50, and claims 38-49 and 51-72 depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance.

Johnson discloses a bi-component link for making a modular papermaking fabric which has a link base component capable of interconnecting to at least one other link and a surface plate component attached to the link base forming a paper support surface. Each component is made through molding techniques to have predetermined characteristics such as open area, permeability, surface finish, etc. The surface plate component is attached to the link base component for combined effect on fabric characteristics. A papermaking fabric is constructed from a plurality of interconnected bi-component links and has predetermined permeability established by the combination of a pattern of open and contact areas on each component of each link. (Abstract).

Legge et al. discloses an endless papermaker press felt having a plurality of modular textile structures which include a plurality of layers of fiber materials and a plurality of yarn

assemblies in which the yarns in each assembly are located in substantially parallel relation with respect to one another, the layers of fiber materials and yarn assemblies not being bound together by any separate binding structure, the yarns located in at least one yarn assembly being disposed in nonparallel relation with respect to the yarns located in an adjacent yarn assembly, and each modular structure being further capable of having distinct chemical or physical treatments applied thereto. (Abstract).

In contrast, claim 37, as amended, recites in part “prefabricating a construction kit of web-shaped material layers, said web-shaped material layers of said construction kit being selectively combinable in a plurality of different combinations to form the coverings of the different categories, the different categories being a forming mesh, a press felt, and a dryer fabric; selecting a first plurality of said web-shaped material layers from said construction kit depending on a category of the different categories and operating conditions of a covering to be produced of the coverings; stacking said first plurality of web-shaped material layers atop one another; and joining said first plurality of web-shaped material layers to one another at least in sections, two-dimensionally, and in a manner that prevents said web-shaped material layers from being detached.” (Emphasis added). Applicant submits that such an invention is not taught, disclosed, or suggested by Johnson and Legge et al.

In contrast, claim 50, as amended, recites in part “a construction kit including prefabricated web-shaped material layers for constructing the covering, said prefabricated web-shaped material layers of said construction kit being selectively combinable in a plurality of different combinations to form a plurality of the covering of different categories, said different categories being a forming mesh, a press felt, and a dryer fabric, a first plurality of said prefabricated web-shaped material layers from said construction kit being selectable depending on a category of the different categories and operating conditions of the covering to be produced of

said plurality of coverings, said first plurality of prefabricated web-shaped material layers being stacked atop one another and joined to one another at least in sections, two-dimensionally, and in a manner that prevents said first plurality of prefabricated web-shaped material layers from being detached from one another.” (Emphasis added). Applicant submits that such an invention is not taught, disclosed, or suggested by Johnson and Legge et al.

Figs. 1, 2, and 3 support the amendment to claims 37 and 50.

Johnson discloses an apparatus relating to papermaking fabrics, especially dryer fabrics. (Column 1, lines 14-15). Modular link base 10 and modular surface plate component 100 are not disclosed as being able to form different categories of fabrics – that is, a forming mesh, a press felt, and a dryer fabric. Legge et al. discloses a press felt. Thus, Applicant submits that Johnson and Legge et al. do not disclose selectively combining pieces of a kit to form different categories of papermaking clothing, the different categories being a forming mesh, a press felt, and a dryer fabric.

An advantage of the present invention is that it provides a single kit from which different categories of papermachine clothing can be selectively formed, the categories being a forming mesh, a press felt, and a dryer fabric.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claims 37 and 50, and claims 38-49 and 51-72 depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Claims 45 and 67-68 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Legge et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,357,386 (Luciano). However, claims 45 and 67-68 depend from claims 37 and 50 respectively, which are in condition for allowance for the reasons given above. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 45 and 67-68 are also now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that the pending claims are definite and do particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Moreover, Applicant submits that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicant has overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicant hereby conditionally petitions therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 897-3400.

Respectfully submitted,

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